four-year terms as governor. Moses subsequently served as FSM ambassador to the United Nations and secretary of foreign affairs. He was elected to the FSM Congress in 2003 and won reelection in 2007. He was the vice speaker of the 14th and the 15th FSM Congresses. He is survived by his wife, four children, and grandchildren (Kaselehlie Press 2009).

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GUAM

During a year in which most of the world experienced a major economic downturn, Guam’s political and economic focus was concerned with what promises to be a major boost to the economy yet comes with attendant political and social consequences. To buttress the previously announced relocation of several thousand marines and their families from Okinawa to Guam, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton traveled to Japan to sign an agree-
ment with Japanese officials to formalize the move (kuan, 17 Feb 2009). On Guam, announcements were made of expenditures or contracts signed as part of the US Department of Defense’s $10 billion in projected spending for the relocation (kuan, 15 Oct 2009). Overall, military construction spending on the island accelerated, which in part compensated for the decrease in tourism resulting from the worldwide economic downturn (Bradley 2009).

Throughout 2008 and early 2009, tourism arrivals declined from Guam’s principal market, Japan. An April 2009 report from the Guam public auditor pointed out that Japan’s 2008 arrival numbers were even lower than in 2004 when the tourist industry was recovering from two super typhoons and coping with the impact of the Asian SARS epidemic. Visitor arrivals from other Asia-Pacific markets also declined in 2008, and the report characterized prospects for tourism in 2009 as “bleak” (kuan, 13 April 2009). On the other hand, Guam Visitors Bureau (gVB) board chairman Dave Tydingco stated that gVB officials were surprised to see that arrivals from Japan had been rising recently. Among the reasons given for the upturn was the strengthening of the yen and the reduction in the fuel surcharge, which decreased the cost of airfare. However, with respect to Guam’s other major market, Korea, visitor numbers remain challenging as that country’s currency, the won, lost 30 percent of its value against the US dollar. Tydingco said, “We are hoping that with the stabilization of the Japan market the summer months are looking better but this global financial crisis is having a significant impact on travel around the world and we just need to be a little bit smarter about how we are going to be able to push tourism in our core markets” (kuan, 18 March 2009).

In April 2009, First Hawaiian Bank issued its economic forecast for Guam noting that, despite difficulties in the tourist industry, the island stands out as one of the few economies in the world that has a brighter future, primarily due to the massive military buildup. The bank’s economic adviser, Dr Leroy Laney, stated, “The coming military buildup occupies center stage on Guam in 2009. It is assured that the buildup will come, and parts of it are already underway, even though some uncertainty still exists as to the exact timing of the transfer” (kuan, 28 April 2009).

Uncertainty about the buildup, though, troubled many island leaders and activists, particularly with respect to infrastructure, environmental, and social considerations. Many of these concerns were voiced in a number of forums, including a series of oversight hearings conducted by Senator Judi Guthertz, chair of the legislature’s Committee on the Guam Military Buildup and Homeland Security (kuan, 3 March 2009). The University of Guam (uOG) also held symposiums featuring speakers on the buildup. In November 2008, the uOG College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, along with Sanctuary, Incorporated, hosted a discussion about the military buildup for students and island residents (PDN, 21 Nov 2008). At a uOG symposium in April 2009, Dr Catherine Lutz of Brown University led a presentation entitled “U.S. Military Basing and Its
Impact on Local Communities and Global U.S. Strategy” (kuam, 13 April 2009). Another symposium featured Meio University’s Kiyoshi Nakachi and focused on Okinawa’s experiences in hosting US military forces (kuam, 15 April 2009).

The US Department of Defense indicated that it needed more land than previously estimated for the buildup of troops and was exploring the possibility of leasing Government of Guam (GovGuam) property (kuam, 17 Feb 2009). In February 2009, Senator Benjamin J F Cruz introduced legislation to allow Guam voters to decide whether they support the buildup; only after public consent is given would a determination be made as to whether the government should lease land to the military. In this same vein, Senators Rory Respicio and Judi Guthertz raised concerns about accessibility of US funding to deal with the expected strains on Guam’s civilian community from the projected expansion of military activity. They cited an e-mail from Enrique Manzanilla, director of the Pacific Southwest Communities and Ecosystems Division of the US Environmental Protection Agency’s Region 9, expressing concerns “that there is no commitment of funds to address the civilian impacts of the military buildup” (kuam, 2 Dec 2008). This same concern was echoed by members of the governor’s Civilian/Military Task Force, which is leading the government’s response to the buildup. Task force member Tony Lamorena said that despite Guam’s 2010 request for funding for the military buildup, there had been no response from the federal authorities, so prospects look dim. He stated, “Obviously we’re not too happy about [the] idea that the budget we submitted has yet to be entertained. But the reality is that a lot of the things we submitted in the 2010 budget are specifically to meet the demands of the military buildup. There’s substantial amount of money for the port, DPW [Department of Public Works], and for various agencies that need to beef up their infrastructure prior to the military beginning the construction. We’re still pushing that the 2010 budget we submitted will be entertained, but as [the] governor stated he is disappointed by the lack of interest or movement by the federal government” (kuam, 21 Dec 2008).

Indigenous rights groups also voiced their concerns on the military buildup and a number of other issues. In October 2008, the Chamoru Summit II was held, with the theme “Mina’dos na Huntan Manamoru: Huntan i Manamoru ni’ Pumetsisigi Dinitetminan Maisa (Chamoru Summit II: A Meeting of the Chamoru People Working towards Self-determination).” The forum brought together more than fifty Chamorro professors and students to learn about effective Chamorro leadership and self-determination. The chair of the summit’s planning committee, Chamorro rights activist Lisa Natividad, stated that the event had two goals: to teach younger generations of Chamorros the meaning of self-determination, and to create functional committees. The different committees “are specific to educational strategies on Chamoru self-determination[,] there’s a second one on rethinking education for Chamoros, [and] one on a legal committee looking at developing legal
strategies for achieving self-determination,” as well as to revitalize the Chamorro Registry (kuam, 25 Oct 2008). (The Chamorro Registry is an election roll maintained by the Guam Election Commission. At some point, the Government of Guam will hold a self-determination vote or a plebiscite on the island’s future political status; those eligible to vote on this issue are the indigenous natives of Guam—the Chamorros.) Another organizer of the summit, former Senator Hope Cristobal, noted that the issue of decolonization was also addressed, with task forces created to cover the status options of statehood, free association, and independence. Cristobal explained that this was done because there is a need to continue public discussion about these status options and to make up for the lack of political discourse on this issue. It was also noted that the increasing pace of the military buildup may make it difficult for Chamorros to exercise self-determination. Cristobal explained that they hoped to hold summits periodically to present new findings and information to the community (kuam, 25 Oct 2008).

The military buildup was also one of the principal concerns in May 2009, when the island’s youth along with various grassroots organizations came together for the “Reclaim Guåhan: Chule’ Tatte Guåhan” youth rally. The event took place at Skinner Plaza in Hagåtña and was organized to provide an outlet for “education, expression and empowerment.” It also featured poetry, local bands, art, film showings, and opportunities to talk about the island’s present and future (kuam, 23 May 2008).

In October 2008, Chamorro activists demonstrated and testified at the Guam Legislature in support of an indigenous fishing rights bill. Maga’håga (the highest-ranking female) Trini Torres of the Taotao-monu Native Rights Group stated their goal was to restore native rights to fish in Guam’s waters (kuam, 31 Oct 2008). The bill, sponsored by Senator Judi Guthertz, was passed unanimously by the legislature in December (kuam, 23 Dec 2008). The new law mandates that the Department of Agriculture and a fishing council made up of grassroots organizations develop rules to allow indigenous fishermen to practice traditional forms of fishing within the preserves. However, in June, Acting Director of Agriculture Joe Torres claimed that the new law is too ambiguous to implement at this point. Torres questioned, “What constitutes a Chamorro grassroots organization? Who has the power to select an indigenous taskforce committee?” Torres said that senators Rory Respicio and Judi Guthertz are currently working on drafting legislation that would clarify these points (kuam, 27 June 2009). Also in June, according to Senator Respicio, the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures, comprising legislators from Micronesia, Hawai’i, and American Sāmoa, adopted a resolution in support of the Chamorro indigenous fishing rights law (pers comm, June 2009).

The attention to Chamorro fishing rights in many ways paralleled broader Guam community concerns about the rising cost of living. As with communities worldwide, the price of gas and electricity was of great concern, par-
ticularly as the price of regular grade gasoline reached $5 per gallon at one point in 2008. The 70 percent fall in world oil prices from July to December 2008 saved island consumers more than $2 per gallon by the end of 2008 (PDN, 1 Jan 2009). On the other hand, the Guam Power Authority’s electricity rates did not keep pace with the drop in gas prices, though consumers were seeing reductions in their power bills by mid-2009 (kuam, 21 April 2009). Overall, purchasing power by Guam’s consumers went down over the past year (PDN, 1 Jan 2009).

One infrastructural problem that remained at center stage of public discussion throughout the year was Guam’s sole civilian landfill. This issue has been in court for years as the federal government sued the Government of Guam for failing to close the Ordot landfill and to open a new permitted facility. Early in 2008, US District Court Judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood placed the DPW Solid Waste Management Division in receivership, citing GovGuam inaction on the matter. In October, the court-appointed receiver released a timetable for constructing a new landfill in Inarajan in southern Guam (PDN, 1 Jan 2009). The site selection has been controversial and opposed for some time by Guam legislators and other concerned residents of Guam, especially those in the south, because of environmental concerns including possible contamination of a nearby water supply (kuam, 3 Feb 2009). Another site, authorized by prior legislation, was preferred by several senators who also objected to the high cost of the receiver’s plans for the new landfill (kuam, 21 Nov 2008).

Early in 2009, based on the receiver’s timeline, Judge Tydingco-Gatewood ordered the Government of Guam to provide the financing for the construction of the new landfill. However, the Camacho administration and the Guam Legislature continued to disagree on the final bond legislation, and, as a result, Tydingco-Gatewood issued a further court order requiring GovGuam to deposit $1 million per week in a special fund to finance the landfill project until an acceptable bond financing measure was in place (kuam, 22 Feb 2009). By June, Gov-Guam had sold $474 million in bonds not only to finance the new landfill but also to pay past-due income tax refunds and cost-of-living allowances for retirees (kuam, 15 Jun 2009).

The two main issues confronting the Guam Public School System this year were selecting a third superintendent to head the department in the past three years and finding a home for the students of John F Kennedy (JFK) High School. JFK High School was closed last year when it was deemed unsafe, and the entire school operation was transferred to George Washington High School in Mangilao. The two schools were forced to share the same campus, necessitating double sessions (PDN, 1 Jan 2009). As an interim solution to finding a new home for JFK High School, the Camacho administration negotiated a one-year lease with Core Tech International Corporation for a warehouse near the airport. The deal called for $4.5 million in lease payments plus an additional $3.9 million for desks, chairs, and other equipment. This was approved by the authorizing statute passed in June, which also provided that these payments could be covered
by the issuance of tax credits. Public schools are scheduled to open by 11 August, and Core Tech spokesman Joshua Tenorio said the next step is to order the necessary school equipment so that it will be on hand for the start of classes (PDN, 27 June 2009).

As a permanent solution, the government is moving forward with constructing a new JFK High School. Camacho administration officials have stated that the contract signing and ground breaking for the project is set for August, with actual construction expected to be finished in nine months. If this holds, JFK students can expect to have their graduation ceremony for the coming term in the new school, according to Dr Nerissa Bretna-Shafer, who was selected to fill the superintendent slot in July 2008 (PDN, 27 June, 1 Jan 2009). In other education news, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges renewed the accreditation for the University of Guam for another eight years, and the prospect of new construction at the university with federal stimulus funds was actively discussed (UOG, May 2009; KUAM, 24 Jan 2009).

In the 2008 general election, voters on Guam went to the polls to choose a new legislature as well as to select mayors, school board members, and the public auditor (GEC Web site). The previous legislature had changed from Republican to Democratic control mid-term when a Republican senator who passed away was replaced by a Democrat in a special election that produced an 8 to 7 Democratic majority. In November 2008, voters increased the Democratic majority to 10 seats in the 15-member body (PDN, 1 Jan 2009). Ousted in the election were Republicans Mark Forbes, Frank Ishisaki, and Jesse Lujan, and Democrat David Shimizu. Two of their replacements were returning senators, Democrats Frank Aguon Jr and Tom Ada. The other two were newcomers Republican Telo Taitague and Democrat Matt Rector, the president of the Guam Federation of Teachers (GEC Web site). Voters also rejected, for the third time, an initiative to authorize casino gambling at Guam Greyhound Park. The proposal received 13,735 “yes” votes and 19,449 “no” votes. Within days of the defeat, Guam Greyhound itself was closed due to ongoing losses in its operations (PDN, 1 Jan 2009).

Guam leaders also saw new opportunities with the election of President Barack Obama. Shortly after his inauguration, the Guam Legislature adopted a resolution setting out an “Agenda of Concerns for Guam on Federal-Territorial Issues” to present to the new president and the incoming US Congress. Among the issues listed were the following: recognition of the Chamorro right to self-determination; improved political status; funding of capital infrastructure to deal with the costs of the military buildup; World War II reparations; establishment of a Guam-only visa waiver program for visitors from the Philippines and China; reimbursement for the adverse impact of the Compacts of Free Association on local health, education, and public safety; the return of ancestral Chamorro lands; exemption from the Jones Act, which requires island use of US shipping and consequently increases the cost of living; investigation of cases of island victims of military radiation poisoning; cleanup
of environmental hazards attributed to federal activity; and increased participation in existing federal programs (Guam Legislature Web site). As 2009 progressed, movement was made on some of these issues, especially war reparations (PDN, 27 June 2009). Additionally, the Obama administration was moving to appoint a Chamorro, Anthony “Tony” Babauta, as assistant secretary of interior for insular affairs (kuam, 10 March 2009).

As one local election wrapped up, island politicians started preparing for 2010, a gubernatorial election year. Former Governor Carl Gutierrez and Senator Frank Aguon Jr announced that they were seeking the Democratic nomination for governor and lieutenant governor, respectively. Gutierrez was governor from 1995 to 2002, and Aguon was the party’s nominee for lieutenant governor in 2006 (kuam, 18 March 2009). On the Republican side, Senator Eddie Baza Calvo, son of former Governor Paul Calvo, made a formal announcement of his gubernatorial bid with Senator Ray Tenorio, who was rumored to be his running mate (kuam, 1 May 2009). Still to jump in the race was Republican Lieutenant Governor Mike Cruz, who had not publicly stated his intentions as of June 2009. There is speculation that Senator James Espaldon may be his running mate.

Among the Guam statesmen who passed away during the year in review was former Speaker Carlos P Taitano, who died of natural causes at the age of ninety-two on 26 March 2009. Taitano was most well known as one of the architects of the Guam Congress walkout in 1949 to protest US Naval Government rule. At that time, the Guam Congress was a purely advisory body, with all executive, legislative, and judicial power resting in the hands of the island’s naval governor. The protest, which received national publicity, is credited with prompting the passage of the Guam Organic Act by the US Congress, which ended the naval government, granted Chamorros US citizenship, and ushered in democratic self-government for the people of Guam. Taitano was also hailed as a leader in the revitalization of indigenous culture in Guam and as a strong advocate for Chamorro self-determination. He was given a state funeral with eulogies by former Governors Paul M Calvo and Carl Gutierrez as well as former US Congressman Robert Underwood (kuam, 4 April 2009). Legislation has also been introduced to rename the Guam Congress Building (GCB), where the 1949 walkout took place, as the Speaker Carlos P Taitano Building (kuam, 27 March 2009). Other Guam leaders who passed away during the year were former Agana Heights Mayor Juan Pangelinan, former Mangilao Mayor Jesus Santos, former Senator Sonny Shelton, pioneer businessman Ken Jones, and longtime newspaper editor and columnist Joe Murphy (Guam Legislature Web site).

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Marshall Islands
The past twelve months in the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) have been characterized both by the breaking of new political ground—including two votes of no confidence, cabinet shake-ups, and emerging diplomatic prospects—and by the reappearance of entrenched electoral, fiscal, and demographic challenges.

Certainly the most highly anticipated and watched political events of the last year were the two votes of no confidence filed against the administration of President Litokwa Tomeing, heading a coalition government led by the Aelon Kein Ad (aka) majority party, within his first fifteen months in office. The first no-confidence vote was introduced to the Nitijela (Parliament) by Ebon Senator John Silk of the opposition United Democratic Party (UDP) on 14 October 2008, the last sitting day of the year’s parliamentary session. In addition to Silk, thirteen other UDP members, including former President and current Jabat Senator Kessai Note, signed the motion, although in entering the motion they acknowledged that they lacked the minimum seventeen votes needed to unseat Tomeing. Among the list of reasons for the motion, the United Democratic Party cited deteriorating relations with the United States, the inaction on the part of the Tomeing government to respond adequately to the recent loss of jobs for Marshallese citizens at the US Army base on Kwajalein, failing to support a bill in the US Senate that would have earmarked $4 million per year for the next fifteen years for health services to Marshallese from nuclear-affected atolls, and the administration’s “refusal” to move forward with the newly approved Uliga Elementary School (Chutaro and Johnson 2008).

According to the RMI constitution, the Nitijela must vote within five to ten days after the submission of a no-confidence motion, regardless of whether or not Parliament is in session during that time. Sensing that the United Democratic Party did not have the votes necessary to prevail, Speaker Jurelang Zedkaia, a ruling aka party member, convened the Nitijela on 21 October; after preliminary opening remarks, UDP chairman Ailinglaplap Senator Ruben Zachras withdrew the motion. The United Democratic Party was further embarrassed by the absence of one of the original signers of the motion, Majuro Senator Wilfred Kendall, who later explained that he failed to attend the meeting as he thought the vote would fail anyway. While significant as only the third no-confidence motion in RMI